

# Perennialism

Teach the principles that are of everlasting importance to all people everywhere.



# View of Education

- Reason taught through literature, philosophy, history and science
- Education should be the same for everyone
- Exposure to history's finest thinkers as models for discovery
- Addresses questions that recur over time



# Key People

- Plato
- Aristotle
- St. Thomas Aquinas
- Mortimer Adler
- Robert Hutchins
- Allan Bloom



# Adler's Paideia Proposal Assumptions (py-dee-a)

Definition: the nurturing of a child

- All children are capable of learning
- Learning is a life-long process
- Learning is created by the child with assistance by the teacher
- Variety of teaching methods
- Preparation for a job is not the primary goal of schooling



# Modes of Teaching

- Lecture - brief
- Coaching - to acquire skills
- Seminar - extended discussion
- Socratic Dialogue - understanding basic ideas and values



# Features of a Perennialist Education

- Teacher directed
- Independent reasoning - major goal
- Curriculum focuses on great ideas
- Use of Great Books (dead white guys)



# Influence Today

- Inclusion - all children can learn the same quality of knowledge
- Individual differences must be compensated by remedial or supplementary instruction - RTI
- Seminar - placing emphasis on teaching children to think
- A greater emphasis on teacher questioning skills



# Negative Implications

- Entire groups are marginalized
- No future orientation
- Elitist - sorts by learning style



# Positive Implications

- Bloom's Taxonomy - hierarchy of questioning
- Students explore timeless philosophical questions
- Students learn how to think



“Textbooks have  
probably done as much  
to degrade the  
American intelligence  
as any single force.”

Robert Hutchins



# Adler

- “There are universal truths about what constitutes a good education, for all men at all times and places simply because they are true.”